

Message Text

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P 061306Z MAY 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY 7322

UNCLAS STATE 105059

THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE SENT TO SECSTATE INFO MANILA CINCPAC
REP GUAM CINCPAC JAKARTA KUALA LUMPUR BANGKOK FROM SINGAPORE
DTG O P 041340Z MAY 75

QUOTE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SREF,VS SN

SUBJECT: VIETNAMESE REFUGEES

REF: STATE 100679

GOS OFFICIALS IN N Y 5 PRESS CONFERENCE ANNOUNCED THAT 25 SHIPS
CARRYING 3,710 VIETNAMESE REFUGEES HAD REACHED SINGAPORE ON WAY TO
GUAM AND SUBIC BAY, PHIL.
MINDEF PERM SEC TAY SIOW WAH AND COMMANDER OF SINGAPORE NAVY JAMES
AERIA CONDUCTED BRIEFING FOR LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL JOURNALISTS
LATE SUNDAY. THEY MADE FOLLOWING POINTS:

1. TWENTY-FIVE VESSELS HAVE ARRIVED AND POSSIBLY FIVE MORE ARE
HEADED FOR SINGAPORE. ALL VESSELS ARE CIVILIAN AND ALL ARE VIETNAMESE

.
THEY RANGE IN SIZE FROM A TANKER CARRYING OVER 800 PERSONS TO
SMALL FISHING VESSELS.

2. THE VESSELS HAVE BEEN CORDONED OFF IN TWO AREAS. NINE ARE AT
BEDOK, WHICH IS IN SINGAPORE WATERS, AND 16 ARE IN RHIO STRAITS,
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JUST OUTSIDE SINGAPORE'S TERRITORIAL WATERS. THE SINGAPORE

NAVY MET THE VESSELS AT THAT POINT AND URGED THEM TO ANCHOR THERE.
NO ONE IS PERMITTED TO LEAVE OR VISIT THE SHIPS.

3. THE VESSELS HAVE REQUESTED CHARTS, FUEL, FOOD AND MEDICAL SUPPLIES
FOR THEIR VOYAGE TO SUBIC BAY, PI, AND GUAM AND HAVE OFFERED TO
PAY FOR THE SUPPLIES. THE SINGAPORE OFFICIALS SAID THE RESUPPLY
OPERATION SHOULD BE COMPLETED BY MORNING OF MAY 6 AND THAT SOME
SHIPS COULD DEPART THAT AFTERNOON.

ASKED IF ALL VESSELS WERE SEA WORTHY ENOUGH TO MAKE IT TO THE
PHILIPPINES AND GUAM, THE SPOKESMAN SAID THEY SHOULD BE ABLE TO
SINCE THEY MADE IT FROM SAIGON TO SINGAPORE.

4. THE GOS OFFICIAL SAID EACH VESSEL HAD ITS OWN SPOKESMAN AND THEY
HAD ASKED SINGAPORE TO TRANSMIT FOR THEM TO THE AMERICAN
EMBASSY AND PRIME MINISTERS OF CANADA AND AUSTRALIA LETTERS OF
APPEAL REQUESTING PERMISSION TO IMMIGRATE. THE LETTERS, THE
SPOKESMAN SAID, WILL BE DELIVERED MONDAY, MAY 6, TO THE APPROPRIATE
EMBASSIES IN SINGAPORE. THE SPOKESMAN SAID THAT NONE OF THE
VIETNAMESE HAVE ASKEDFOR REFUGE IN SINGAPORE. VIETNAMESE
ON ONE OF THE SMALL VESSELS INDICATED THEIR WISH TO GO TO FRANCE.

5. THE NAVY SPOKESMAN SAID THEY SAW NO MILITARY PERSONNEL
ABOARD THE VESSELS, BUT THEY SUSPECT THAT THERE ARE SMALL ARMS
ABOARD SOME SHIPS.

6. USIS EMPLOYEE/VOA CORRESPONDENT ROSARIO ATTENDED BRIEFING AND
REPORTED ABOVE INFORMATION. EMBASSY EXPECTS TO HAVE FURTHER
INFORMATION MAY 5.

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